

The Technical School in Vlasotince at the conference "Your Europe, Your Voice!"

Serbia

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DESCRIPTION

The EU Info network recognised the **Technical School in Vlasotince** (a VET school) as one of the schools that fosters a democratic culture. As a result, the school was invited to apply for the **conference "Your Europe, Your Voice!" 2023** under the theme "Democratic Youth Dialogues". The event brought together **105 students from 35 schools** across EU Member States, candidate countries, and a Brussels-based European school. Designed to **spark debate and collaboration**, the conference encouraged participants to explore the meaning of **democratic engagement and youth activism**.

During this two-day event in Brussels, **students took part in workshops where they listened, learned and discussed participatory democracy with the aim of drawing up and presenting their recommendations on building communities of sustainable democracy**. Students collaborated to draft five concrete policy proposals, which were later presented by peer-nominated spokespersons during a youth plenary.

The students voted to rank the proposals, with "EU Simplified" emerging as the most popular. This proposal aims to make the EU more understandable and integrated into citizens' everyday lives, especially for youth, by offering topic-based updates, interactive features, and direct communication with EU officials.

During this event, the **students from the Technical School of Vlasotince had the opportunity to meet young people from across Europe, engaging in discussions about democracy, democratic values, differences between peoples, beliefs and cultural heritage**.

After the event, **the students shared their knowledge and experiences with their peers**. Two of the three participants went on to actively engage in EU-funded projects such as Erasmus+ and continue to be involved, now serving as youth leaders.

This experience also inspired a new initiative within the school. Motivated by the cultural exchange and numerous international connections formed during the YEYS! event, **the school's Team launched a new activity to celebrate the Day of Education for Democratic Culture: the international competition "Pictures of My Homeland"** (described in another example) whose goal was to **develop tolerance, value cultural diversity, and enhance skills for cooperation**.